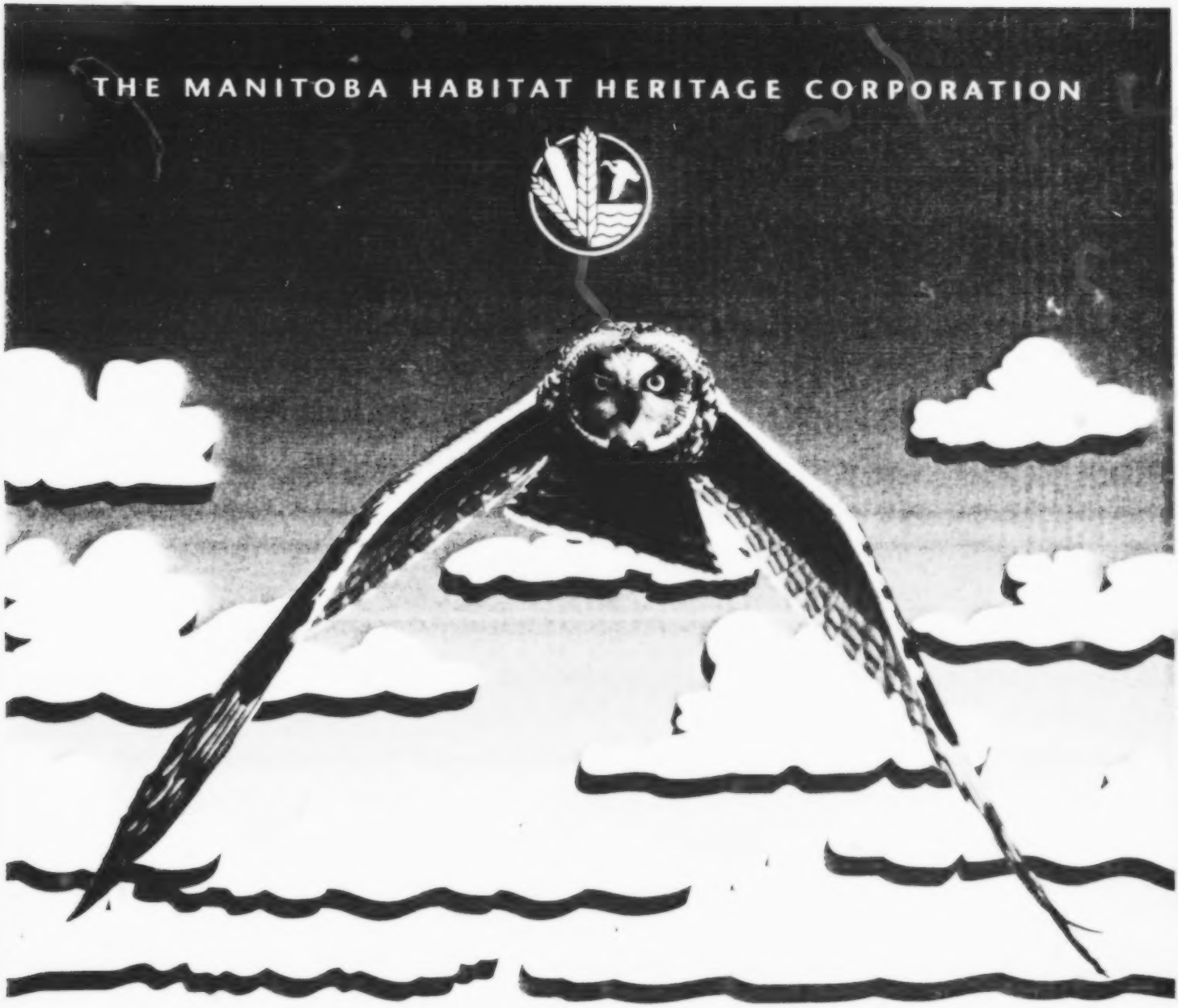
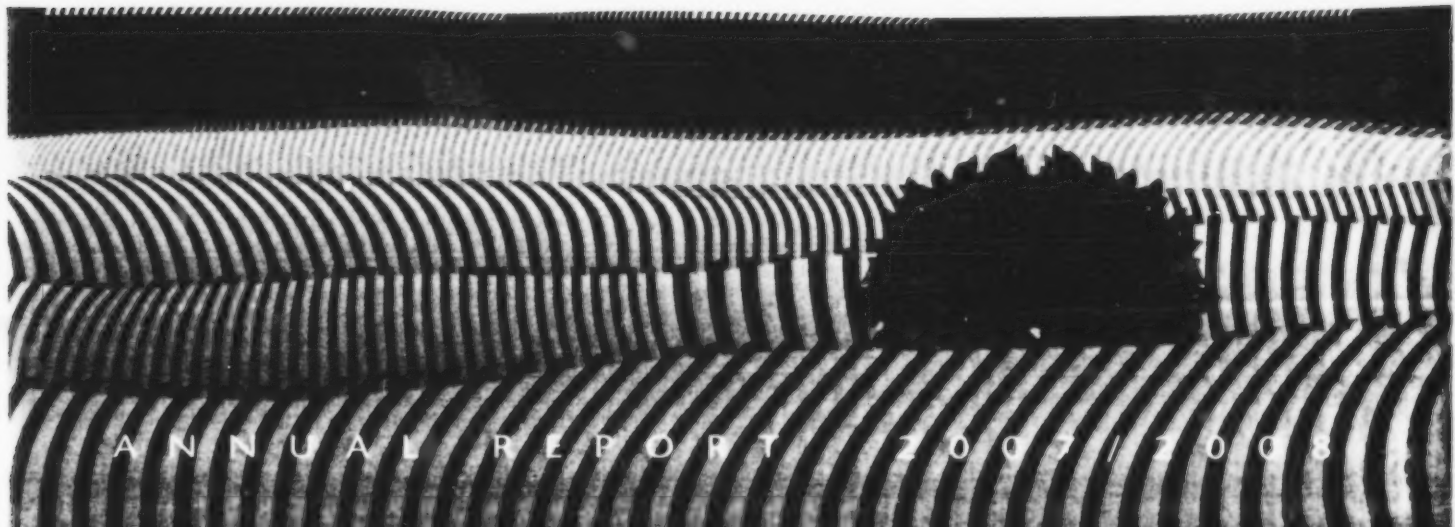
THE MANITOBA HABITAT HERITAGE CORPORATION





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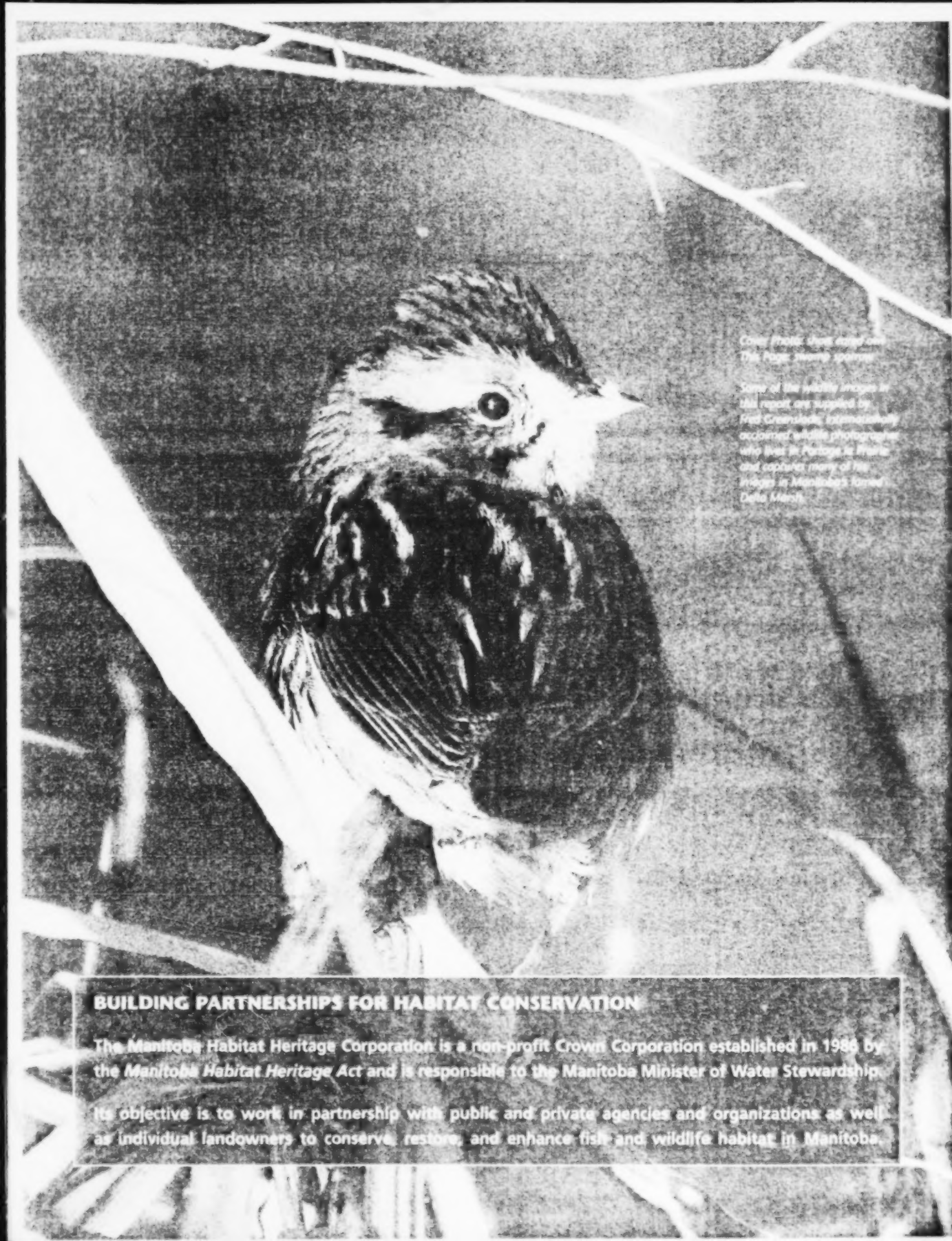


Cover Photo: Short-eared owl
This Page: Downy woodpecker

Some of the wildlife pictures in this report are supplied by Fred Greenhalgh, internationally acclaimed wildlife photographer who lives in Portage la Prairie and captures many of his images in Manitoba's forest.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR HABITAT CONSERVATION

The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation is a non-profit Crown Corporation established in 1986 by the *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* and is responsible to the Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship.

Its objective is to work in partnership with public and private agencies and organizations as well as individual landowners to conserve, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in Manitoba.

The Honourable Christine Melnick
Minister of Water Stewardship
Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The year that ended March 31, 2008 was highlighted by continued progress in conservation by The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

This year marked a milestone with MHHC's 400th conservation agreement (CA) being signed. It also marked the 10th year since the *Conservation Agreements Act* was enacted by the Government of Manitoba. Over the past ten years, CAs have proven to be an effective tool in conserving Manitoba's natural landscape within our agricultural areas and MHHC, functioning only in one province, nonetheless holds one of the largest CA portfolios in Canada.

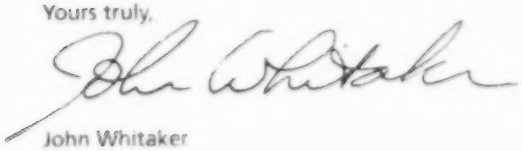
Implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) continues to progress successfully. Recognized by many as the most successful wildlife conservation partnership on the continent, Manitoba remains a priority area for NAWMP program delivery. In 2007/08 a new Manitoba Implementation Plan was developed and is helping to refocus the efforts of Manitoba NAWMP partners.

MHHC's involvement in riparian areas includes conservation agreements as well as *Managing the Water's Edge*, an initiative that offers landowners and other land managers useful information on sustainable use of riparian and associated lands. MHHC staff also provides riparian area assessment input into watershed planning efforts across the province.

MHHC continues to deliver conservation agreements on important habitats identified for species at risk. This conservation tool has been well received by landowners even though the larger issue of species at risk conservation has, at times, been contentious.

Overall, MHHC continues to provide unique conservation products and services to rural landowners. Looking forward, we anticipate that demand for the conservation options it provides will continue to be high.

Yours truly,



John Whitaker
Chairperson

Program

Mandate And Roles

Established as a Crown Corporation by the *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* of 1986, The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) mandate is conservation, restoration and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat in the province of Manitoba. This is achieved through partnerships with private landowners, farm organizations, conservation groups, corporations and government agencies. While its mandate is broad, MHHC programming focuses on private land in the agricultural region of Manitoba. The Corporation promotes conservation practices that enhance wildlife habitat, encourage productive uses of the land and help to sustain farm family income.

MHHC conducts activities under three major program areas.

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

MHHC coordinates North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) implementation in Manitoba in partnership with other agencies and organizations. It also directly delivers NAWMP activities in partnership with Delta Waterfowl Foundation through the Potholes Plus Program. The emphasis is on long-term conservation of threatened and important wetlands and associated habitats.

Riparian Habitat Management

Riparian habitats are found along streambanks, lakeshores and wetlands. Although they are only a small area of the landscape, they are rich in biodiversity and contribute to water quality. MHHC programs for riparian areas provide long-term protection of priority habitats and also encourage landowners to adopt practices that enhance riparian area health.

Species At Risk

MHHC delivers voluntary habitat securement programs for species at risk, with a focus on mixed-grass prairie and riparian habitats, as well as specific habitats of importance for species of concern.

In addition to its program areas, MHHC receives donations of land and conservation agreements (easements) from private landowners.

MHHC Land Conservation Summary

The agricultural region of Manitoba is an important region for wildlife. MHHC's goal — conserving habitat important to a wide array of plants, birds, land animals, fish and other aquatic animals — is achieved through cooperative agreements, easements, leases, and, in some cases, land ownership.

MHHC's land conservation activity summary is found in Table 1. It highlights the cumulative accomplishments of MHHC and includes purchased and donated lands, conservation agreements, leases and cooperative management agreements with landowners. To date, nearly 3,000 agreements with landowners, conservation agencies and other organizations have been implemented. As of March 31, 2008, MHHC's cumulative activities had conserved or influenced 214,959 acres of habitat.

Table 1: MHHC Land Conservation Activity Summary[1] to March 31, 2008

	# sites	# acres
Acquired and Donated Lands		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	36	7,991
Critical Wildlife Habitat Program[2]	21	4,130
Lands held in title by MHHC	*57*	*12,121*
Conservation Agreements		
Potholes Plus and related	212	30,767
Habitat Stewardship Program	125	25,975
Other Agreements	41	5,017
Donated Agreements	23	2,355
Conservation Agreements held by MHHC	*401*	*64,114*
Leased Lands (cumulative acreage)[3]		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	204	19,137
Critical Wildlife Habitat Program[2]	121	18,501
Leases held by MHHC	*325*	*37,638*
Cooperative Agreements		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	683	8,146
Riparian Stewardship Projects	231	59,020
Manitoba Agro Woodlot Program (to March 31, 2005)	1,207	33,920
Cooperative Agreements held by MHHC	*2,121*	*101,086*
Total, to March 31, 2008	**2,961**	**214,959**

[1] *This table summarizes MHHC's cumulative accomplishments and includes activities that are still active as well as those that are no longer under agreement.*
[2] *Includes lands that are held by MHHC in trust on behalf of CWHP partners.*
[3] *Includes current and lapsed leases and cooperative agreements.*

Board of Directors

The *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* of 1986 requires MHHC to be governed by a Board of Directors responsible to the Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship.

As of March 31, 2008 the MHHC Board consisted of 10 members:

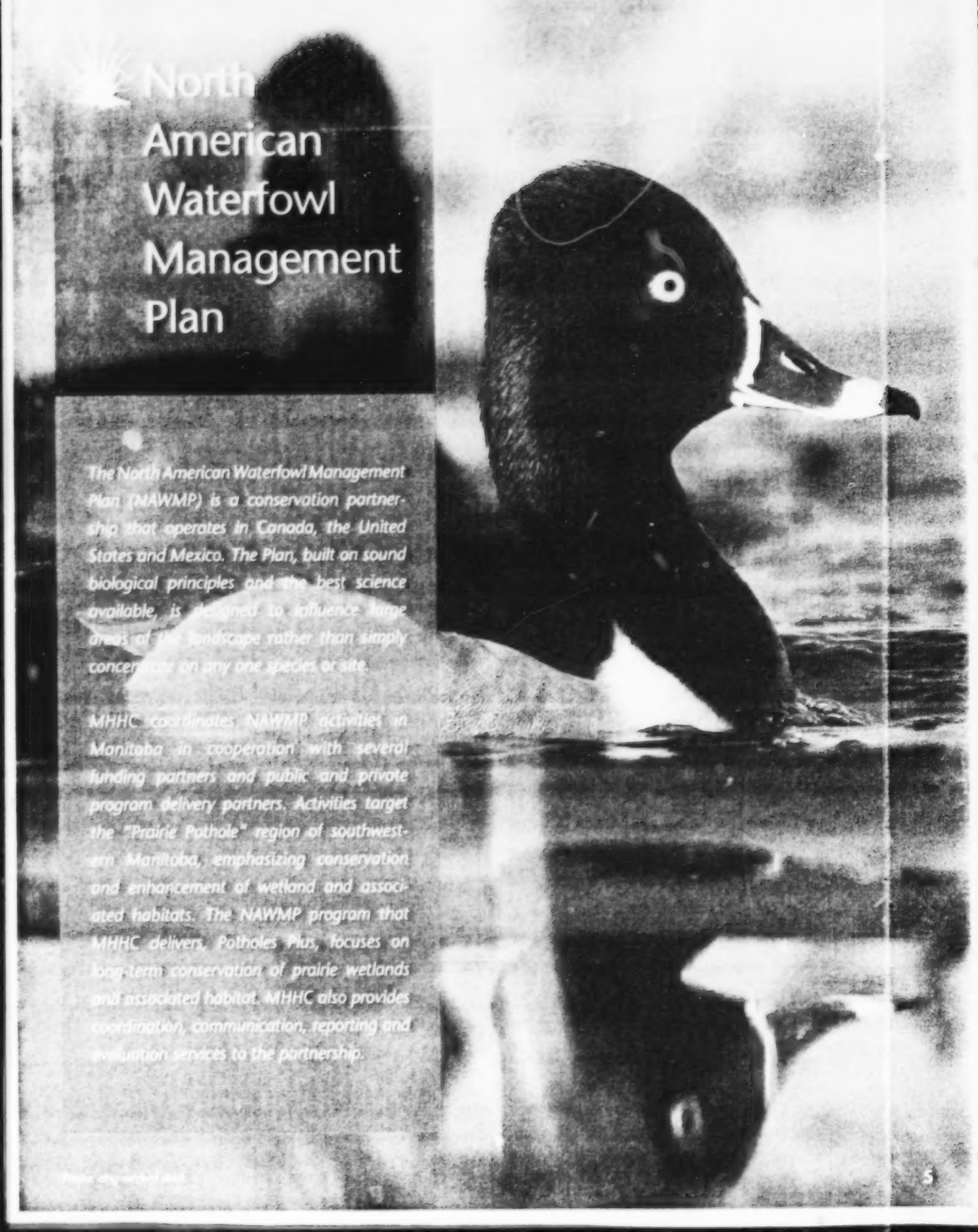
John Whitaker*, Chairperson	Citizen Representative
Don Norquay*, (Vice Chair)	Manitoba Water Stewardship
Bob Grant	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Murray Dubowits	Citizen Representative
Cornie Goertzen*	Manitoba Conservation Districts Association
Michael Kingdon	Keystone Agricultural Producers
Roger Wilson	Association of Manitoba Municipalities
Patrick Rakowski*	Canadian Wildlife Service
Robert Olson	Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Barry Todd	Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Ex officio Members

Deanna Dixon	Prairie Habitat Joint Venture
Jack Dubois	Manitoba Conservation
Mike Moore	Nature Conservancy of Canada
Lawrie Hilton	Manitoba Wildlife Federation (Habitat Trust)
Jim Tokarchuk	Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration
Brian Sterling	The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

*Executive Committee Member

The MHHC board conducted three meetings in 2007/08 as well as one field tour of MHHC projects.



North American Waterfowl Management Plan

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) is a conservation partnership that operates in Canada, the United States and Mexico. The Plan, built on sound biological principles and the best science available, is designed to influence large areas of the landscape rather than simply concentrate on any one species or site.

MHHC coordinates NAWMP activities in Manitoba in cooperation with several funding partners and public and private program delivery partners. Activities target the "Prairie Pothole" region of southwestern Manitoba, emphasizing conservation and enhancement of wetland and associated habitats. The NAWMP program that MHHC delivers, Potholes Plus, focuses on long-term conservation of prairie wetlands and associated habitat. MHHC also provides coordination, communication, reporting and evaluation services to the partnership.

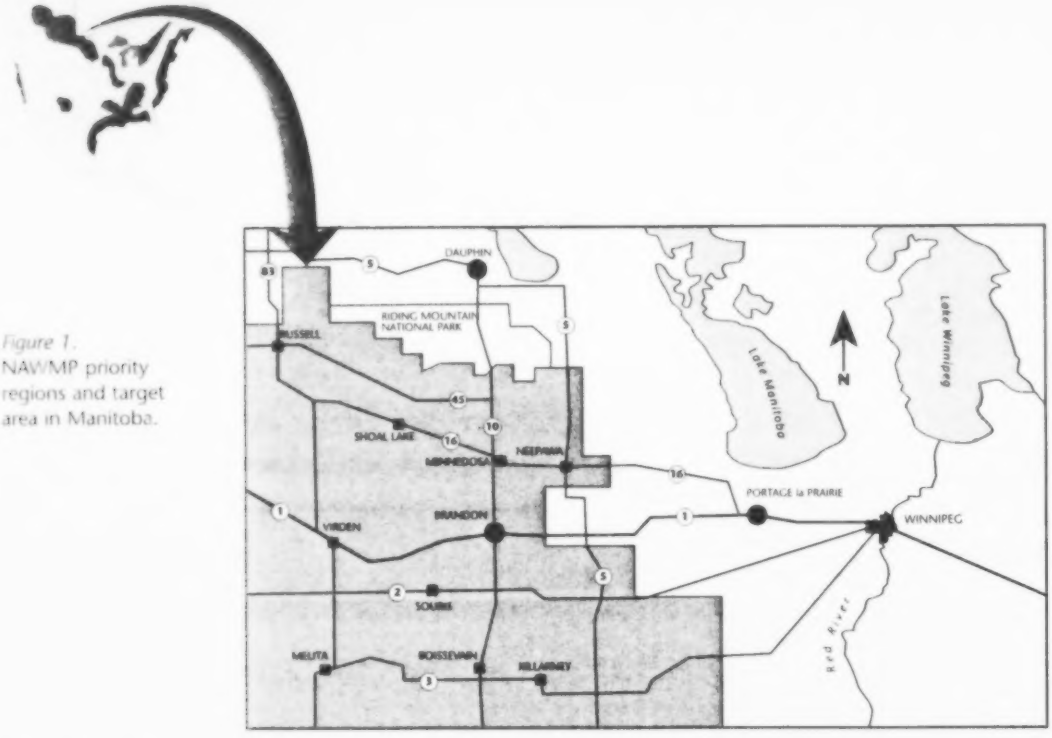


Figure 1.
NAWMP priority regions and target area in Manitoba.

The NAWMP was signed into existence in 1986 by the governments of Canada and the United States. The success of this continental initiative focused on waterfowl population recovery is evident by its longevity, strong linkages amongst its many partners, and millions of acres of habitat conserved and influenced in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

The prairie and aspen parkland region of southern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba provides critical nesting areas and migration stopover sites for much of the continent's duck population and is recognized as one of the highest priorities for waterfowl conservation. Here, NAWMP activities are coordinated under the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture. Figure 1 shows the prairie pothole region of southwestern Manitoba, the main area of the province in which NAWMP activities are conducted.

Program planning and accomplishments in Manitoba complement broader continental efforts. NAWMP partners across North America influence all types of habitats used by waterfowl including breeding grounds, migration resting sites and wintering areas. NAWMP success in Manitoba is demonstrated by the thousands of acres that have been affected by its programs, some through long-term conservation agreements and others by information and incentive programs that stimulated adoption of conservation farming activities. This has been made possible by the investment of $128,865,856 million in conservation activities in this province, 87 per cent of which has been contributed by public and private sources from outside the province.

The highest priority habitats for conservation are mainly found on privately owned farmland. Accordingly, NAWMP partners offer voluntary conservation options that provide landowners incentives to conserve habitats and/or adopt "wildlife-friendly" land use practices. Ongoing program acceptance depends on maintaining positive relationships with individual landowners and community-based

organizations, including local farm groups, conservation districts, wildlife associations and rural municipalities.

A broad-based partnership is at the core of NAWMP, reflecting agricultural, conservation and rural landscape interests. MHHC partners in Manitoba include:

Agriculture Canada (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration)
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service)
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
Manitoba Conservation
Manitoba Water Stewardship
Keystone Agricultural Producers
Association of Manitoba Municipalities
Manitoba Cattle Producers Association
Conservation Districts
Nature Conservancy of Canada

A Manitoba NAWMP Overview

MHHC tracks land areas that are secured by NAWMP partners as well as those influenced by conservation land use activities. "Secured" habitat is habitat conserved through an agreement of seven years or more. It may include lease, purchase, long-term management agreement or conservation agreement. "Influenced" land is land owned by individuals who have been encouraged to use conservation farming practices. It is important to note that the numbers represent cumulative activities that have occurred since NAWMP inception, including lands for which cooperative agreements have lapsed or influenced acres where conservation practices may or may not be continuing. The cumulative acreages are presented to provide a measure of the cumulative accomplishments since inception, just as the expenditure table provides a cumulative expenditure summary.

Categories of Conservation Activity:

Secured: Any habitat conserved through an agreement of seven years or more. May include lease, purchase, long-term management agreement or conservation agreement.

Influenced: Any land that is owned by individuals who have been encouraged to use conservation farming practices.

In 2007/08, NAWMP partners added another 16,574 acres of secured wildlife habitat lands, bringing the cumulative total to 372,571 acres since NAWMP inception. The total area of land affected by all NAWMP activities rose to 1,766,773 acres.

The NAWMP influences a broad range of habitat types in Manitoba. These include:

- Wetlands ranging from prairie potholes less than an acre in size to large staging marshes
- Previously drained wetlands that have been restored
- Upland habitats such as grasslands, shrublands and aspen parklands
- Erosion-prone cultivated lands converted to permanent grass and forage cover
- Rangelands improved for livestock and wildlife through managed grazing and livestock watering practices
- Haylands managed as productive wildlife habitat
- Conventionally tilled fields converted to zero-tillage and winter cereal croplands
- Nesting structures placed in wetlands to improve nesting success.

These habitats and land use practices provide breeding areas for waterfowl and support a great diversity of other bird species as well as mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

Within NAWMP, MHHC provides field delivery services, coordination, communications, evaluation and planning activities. These services were supported in 2007/08 with funding from three major sources:

- Manitoba Conservation
- Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service)
- U.S. North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), through the Delta Waterfowl Foundation

Financial and in-kind support was also received from a number of other partners.

Table 2: NAWMP Activity Summary* to March 31, 2008 (Acres)

	Green Acres	DU Program – NAWMP	Nature Conservancy of Canada	Potholes Plus	HELP**	NAWMP Total
Secured 2007/08	207	9,033	1,914	5,420***		16,574
Before 2007/08	37,881	248,315	22,405	36,561	10,835	355,997
Total Secured	**38,088**	**257,348**	**24,319**	**41,981**	**10,835**	**372,571**
Influenced Lands 2007/08		87,991				87,991
Before 2007/08	20,580	1,282,104		3,527		1,306,211
Total Influenced	**20,580**	**1,370,095**		**3,527**		**1,394,202**
Program Totals	**58,668**	**1,627,443**	**24,319**	**45,508**	**10,835**	**1,766,773**

* *Includes lands under agreement as well as previously secured lands or activities where agreements have lapsed*

** *Habitat Enhancement Land use Program*

*** *Includes Turtle Mountain Conservation District, Highways Mitigation and Wildlife Habitat Canada CAs*

Table 3: NAWMP Partner Expenditures in Manitoba

Agency	1986 to March 31, 2008	Percentage
Manitoba Sources	**$16,839,252**	**13.1**
Other Canadian Sources		
Canadian Wildlife Service	$17,738,838	13.8
Wildlife Habitat Canada	885,300	0.7
Ducks Unlimited Canada	2,545,000	2.0
Total Other Canadian Sources	**$21,169,138**	**16.4**
Total Canadian Sources	**$38,008,389**	**29.5**
US Soucres		**0.0**
Delta Waterfowl Foundation	$6,298,442	4.9
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	31,880,888	24.7
US Fish and Wildlife Service	37,807,540	29.3
US States	11,054,035	8.6
Nature Conservancy of Canada	3,816,560	3.0
Total US Sources	**$90,857,466**	**70.5**
Total Expenditures	**$128,865,856**	**100.0**

Conservation Agreements: 10 Years and Still Going Strong

The *Conservation Agreements Act* was proclaimed in 1998. For the past ten years Conservation Agreements (CAs) have been the primary tool used by MHHC for long-term habitat securement. In 2007/08 MHHC signed its 400th CA, the largest number held by any single organization in Canada.

In Manitoba, the term conservation agreement is synonymous with what are called conservation easements in other jurisdictions. Regardless of the name, it is a means by which habitat on private land can be protected without the land having to change hands. Prior to 1998, purchasing land was the only way for conservation agencies to effect long term protection of private land habitat.

When a landowner signs a CA the land is not sold. Rather, some of the land rights applying to the habitat under agreement are transferred to the CA holder. The CA ensures that the habitat will be protected, regardless of who owns the lands, for as long as the CA is in force. All other rights of ownership remain with the landowner, who continues to control access and use the land, subject to the provisions of the CA. Adjacent lands that are not part of the CA have no restrictions placed on them.

CAs can be applied to habitats like wetlands, woodlands, grasslands, riparian areas without having any effect on cultivated lands. Most of MHHC's CAs include "no-break/no-drain" restrictions, which means that activities such as haying, grazing, hunting and trapping are not affected. Because CAs are registered on the land title, they remain in force for the term of the CA. All MHHC CAs have been signed in perpetuity.

Landowner response has been positive. MHHC has signed up 401, totalling 64,114 acres to March 31, 2008. Surveys of CA landowners have shown that 92% would still sign a CA with MHHC and 88% would recommend it to their friends and neighbours.

Waterfowl nest tunnel with nesting mallards (Photo: Al Bourner)

Payments To Landowners In The Millions

Since MHHC began delivering CAs in 1999, payments to landowners for CAs have reached over $ 4.8 million, $4,848,887.36 to be exact. Those payments recognize the long-term conservation commitments made by those co-operators.

MHHC's CA funding comes from a number of sources in Canada and the United States and for a range of habitats: wetlands, wetland fringes, grasslands, woodlands, riparian areas, and habitats for species at risk.

Using CAs, landowners can draw some capital from their operation without having to sell property or other assets associated with farm production. Landowners have often applied CA funds to improvements in their farm operations like establishment of permanent cover and grazing management systems.

Edith Keir (right) sold and donated CAs to MHHC (Photo: Tim Sopuck)

Paying landowners for conservation of habitat is consistent with the "ecological goods and services" concept: the idea that landowners should be recognized financially for the ecological "services" – biodiversity, clean water, soil conservation and carbon storage to name a few – that they maintain when they make the conscious decision to conserve habitat. Through its funding partners, MHHC has transferred significant funds directly to farmers to support their habitat conservation decisions.

MHHC NAWMP ACTIVITIES

Potholes Plus Program

MHHC's NAWMP field delivery focuses on the use of conservation agreements (easements) to conserve wetland and associated habitat on private, agricultural land. MHHC may also purchase or acquire donated lands and it conducts waterfowl enhancement and management activities on some of its secured habitats.

Conservation Agreements: Since the proclamation of the *Conservation Agreements Act* by the Manitoba Government in 1998, conservation agreements (CAs) have become a flexible option for protecting habitat on private land. Essentially an easement, a CA enables a recognized conservation agency or organization to enter into an agreement with a landowner to protect habitat. The agreement is recorded on the land title and remains in force with a transfer of ownership. Many CAs acquired by MHHC may continue to be used for agricultural activities such as haying and grazing as long as the natural values are protected. All MHHC agreements are held in perpetuity.

Under NAWMP, MHHC delivers all of its purchased CAs through the Potholes Plus Program, a partnership with the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. MHHC holds all acquired CAs. In 2007/08 a total of 29 CAs, covering 3,984 acres, were acquired. Since inception, 212 CAs, covering 30,767 acres, have been secured through the Potholes Plus program. An additional eight Potholes Plus CAs were in process at year end.

Conservation Agreement Baseline Inventory and Monitoring: MHHC conducts baseline inventories of CAs it secures within two years of the finalization of the CA. In 2007/08, a two-person field team contacted landowners, collected data and completed reports on 68 CAs from all MHHC program areas, totaling 10,997 acres. The inventory collects basic biological information and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) reference points of the boundaries of all habitat parcels in the CA.

MHHC also conducts annual monitoring of all CAs, using a combination of ground and aerial inspections to identify possible agreement violations. In 2007/08 three CA violations were encountered during annual monitoring and baseline inventory activities. MHHC staff also attempt to contact every CA landowner at least once a year.

Green Acres

Prior to the Potholes Plus Program, MHHC's NAWMP activities, especially habitat leasing, were delivered through its Green Acres Program. Activities like habitat leasing that were significant under the Green Acres program are no longer carried out but MHHC continues to record donated lands under this program. MHHC has acquired a total of 57 parcels of land, totaling 12,121 acres, through purchase or donation. No purchases were completed in 2007/08, but one donated parcel of land, totaling 80 acres was received this year. A total of 23 CAs, totaling 2,355 acres have been donated to MHHC to date and two CAs totaling 207 acres were received this year. An additional three CA donations were in process at year end.

MHHC's donated lands and CAs include a variety of wetland, woodland, riparian and other native habitats across the province.

Of the 204 habitat leases (19,137 acres secured) that were signed in prior years, all have now expired. No new leases were signed this year, which is consistent with MHHC's focus on permanent securement activities, especially CAs. A number of lessees in the program subsequently signed CAs with MHHC.

Land Management: Lands acquired by MHHC require ongoing monitoring and management. In addition to site inspections, 19 parcels received some management treatment in 2007/08. Specific activities included:

- 735 acres of hay leases
- 2,465 acres of grazing management systems for grassland management purposes
- 78 acres of land where weed control was conducted
- 621 acres of permanent cover re-seeded

As much as possible, land management activities are conducted with the cooperation of neighbouring agricultural producers.

Waterfowl Nest Tunnel Program: MHHC has established and/or maintains 1,986 nesting tunnels across southern Manitoba. That includes 284 Delta Waterfowl Foundation structures that MHHC now manages by agreement with the Foundation. Through that agreement, 150 new structures were placed in project wetlands in 2007/08. Those tunnels were placed primarily on existing Potholes Plus CAs to enhance waterfowl nesting success. Each tunnel receives an annual, spring maintenance inspection to ensure that it will provide a suitable nesting medium.

Waterfowl nesting success, which can be lower than 10 per cent for ducks nesting on the ground, will reach as high as 90 per cent for mallards that nest in tunnels. As well, wetlands secured through the nest tunnel program also provide benefits to more than 100 other wildlife species.

Special NAWMP Projects

NAWMP Implementation Plan: MHHC is coordinating efforts to develop a new, 25-year implementation plan for NAWMP in Manitoba as part of a larger planning effort for NAWMP in the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture. The implementation plan was in its final stages at year-end.

Highways Mitigation Projects: MHHC is partnering with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) and Manitoba Conservation to provide mitigation for wetland losses when highway works affect natural habitats. This partnership helps MIT achieve a *no net loss* objective for wetlands associated with major highway development.

Under this program MHHC is securing perpetual conservation agreements for mitigation of wetland losses resulting from the twining of the Trans Canada Highway near the Saskatchewan border. It has also established a partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada, which undertakes all associated wetland restoration. To date a total of 1,095 acres of wetland and associated upland habitat have been secured and 18 acres of wetlands have been restored. No CAs were signed in 2007/08, but 788 acres were in process at year end.

MHHC also has agreements to carry out wetland mitigation activities associated with construction on Highways 10 and 16 in the NAWMP target area. To date, a total of 59 acres of wetland and associated habitats have been secured under these agreements and 55 acres were in process at year end.

Wildlife Habitat Canada Partnership: Each waterfowl hunter in the country contributes to habitat conservation by buying a duck stamp along with their federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Licence. This money is administered by Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC), a national, non-profit conservation organization, and is used to support habitat conservation. In 2007/08 WHC provided a grant to MHHC to protect waterfowl habitat with perpetual conservation agreements. In total, nine CAs were acquired protecting 1,040 acres of wetlands.

Turtle Mountain Conservation District Partnership: Oriented strand board production in Manitoba, Northwestern Ontario and Minnesota, has placed increased harvest pressure on the mainly-wooded slopes of the Turtle Mountain escarpment. Late in 2004/05, MHHC entered into a partnership with the Turtle Mountain Conservation District (TMCD) to deliver conservation agreements on watershed-sensitive lands. A total of 12 CAs have been completed on 1,731 acres. In 2007/08 three CAs on 397 acres were completed and two more were in progress at year end.

Farm Stewardship Association of Manitoba (FSAM): FSAM is a producer-directed organization established primarily to deliver the Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) program in Manitoba. The EFP program has been initiated under the Environment Chapter of the federal government's Agricultural Policy Framework. The program provides farm families the opportunity to assess the environmental status of their operations and to adopt beneficial management practices to mitigate any potential adverse effects their activities may have on the environment. A completed EFP allows producers to access cost-shared incentive funding to implement a number of beneficial management practices.

MHHC participates by having membership on FSAM's Board of Directors and participation on FSAM's Communications Committee.

Regional and National NAWMP Activities: As coordinating body for NAWMP in Manitoba, MHHC participates in a number of NAWMP committees and activities at the regional and national levels. These include the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture Advisory Board and its Waterfowl Working Group, Policy and Communications committees. MHHC chairs the latter.

Nationally, MHHC is represented at the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. MHHC also participates in the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Proposal Writers Working Group.

At the international level, MHHC participated in the NAWMP Continental Assessment Steering Committee, which evaluated and reported on the effectiveness of NAWMP's 20-year record in all NAWMP Joint Ventures.

NAWMP PARTNER ACTIVITIES

Ducks Unlimited, NAWMP Program: Ducks Unlimited Canada delivers a range of NAWMP program options, including land lease and purchase, conservation agreements and a range of conservation farming options. These include zero tillage, permanent forage cover establishment, managed grazing and fall-seeded crops.

In 2007/08 a total of 9,033 acres were secured by agreements ranging from 10 years to perpetuity, 26,714 acres of habitat lands were enhanced and a further 61,277 acres were influenced by conservation demonstration initiatives. Consistent with the new Manitoba Implementation Plan for NAWMP, DUC is focusing more efforts on wetland restoration activities.

The *Nature Conservancy of Canada* is also a NAWMP program delivery partner, focusing on wetland and associated habitats on aspen parkland habitats in western Manitoba especially in lands in the vicinity of Riding Mountain National Park. In 2007/08 it secured 5 sites through purchase or perpetual CAs for a total of 1,914 habitat acres with funding support from NAWMP sources in the United States.

Esplin Conservation Agreement a Milestone

Farming in "pothole country" has unique challenges, says Greg Esplin, who has spent the last quarter-century farming in ways that have protected many sloughs and potholes on his sprawling grain-farm near Rapid City. These valuable natural areas have been protected by a conservation agreement with MHHC.

The agreement spans 340 habitat acres on ten quarter-sections. With the CA in place Esplin still owns and controls access to the property and continues to farm the cultivated acres. The CA ensures that the natural habitat under agreement is maintained in its existing state.

In addition to its importance as a natural habitat, the CA is also special because it is the 400th that MHHC has signed up since it began delivering this conservation option in 1999.

The Esplin farm is located in the heart of "pothole country," one of the most valued duck nesting regions on the continent. "Wetlands like these are particularly important habitat," said Gerald Forsyth, MHHC field representative in Minnedosa. "While they are valuable for nesting waterfowl, they are equally important habitat for hawks, song birds and other wildlife."

Farming around potholes and sloughs is nothing new for the family. Both Greg and his father have made a living while continuing to maintain a large number of potholes and Greg doesn't feel the Conservation Agreement will have any adverse effects.

"It isn't going to make much of a difference," he said. "You can't level everything out like a table top. You have to work with the land the way it is."

Adapted from an article in the Minnedosa Tribune

Greg and Judy Esplin (Photo: Bill Stilwell)

A 'Special Place' Donated to MHHC

In July of 2007 a dedication was held for the donation of 160 acres of land located near Crandall, MB to the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation. Grant Hyndman and his son John along with his cousins Beverley and Ronald Coveney donated two adjoining pieces of prime wildlife habitat about 50 miles northwest of Brandon. The property had been in their family for over 100 years.

The event was presided over by the MHHC Chairman, John Whitaker and Reston Field Representative Curtis Hullick. Grant Hyndman recalled many fond memories of camping out at the property during haying seasons and how it would always be a special place for him. He was happy that this special place would now be conserved into the future.

Many relatives and friends of the Hyndman's and Coveny's attended the event, which was held during the annual Crandall District reunion.

The Hyndman and Coveney families at the dedication ceremony (Photo: Maria Neumann)

Hunters' Dollars at Work to Protect Habitat

Ever wonder where duck stamp dollars go? This year, the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) is permanently protecting 1,040 acres of wetlands in Manitoba's prairie pothole region thanks to a $100,000.00 grant generated from waterfowl hunters.

This project is a partnership between MHHC and Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC), a national, non-profit conservation organization. An $8.50 stamp on every federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit creates a fund used by WHC to support habitat conservation.

Purchases of conservation stamps and prints have directly contributed over $32 million to hundreds of projects across Canada since 1985. Overall, WHC has dedicated over $52 million to habitat conservation, restoration and enhancement. WHC works through partnerships with landowners, governments, non-government organizations and industry to achieve its objectives.

In discussing support for this project, WHC director, Bob Barton, stated, "WHC is interested in projects where we can make a connection back to the people who buy the stamp." He further noted, "We're pleased with the level of wetland protection being provided by the project."

Lorne Colpitts, MHHC chief executive officer, said, "We appreciate having funds from waterfowl hunters to purchase perpetual conservation easements on wetlands. Hunters will be happy to know that every WHC dollar we received is going directly to protect wetlands."

Adapted from an article in the Winnipeg Free Press

Lorne Colpitts (left) receiving cheque from Bob Barton, Wildlife Habitat Canada Director (Photo: Tim Sopuck)

MHHC Employee Receives National Recognition

Herb Goulden, who retired from the Province of Manitoba in 2000, recently received the National NAWMP Great Blue Heron Award, recognizing his contributions to the Plan and other conservation initiatives in Manitoba.

Goulden began his career with the province of Manitoba in 1963, serving in resource planning and wildlife management capacities. He was a key player in the planning and implementation of the Habitat Enhancement Land-Use Program (HELP), the first NAWMP pilot project. Goulden championed important adjuncts to program delivery, including operation of a Local Advisory Committee, regular updates to municipal governments and a Landowner Appreciation Barbecue. HELP's lessons served Manitoba NAWMP partners well.

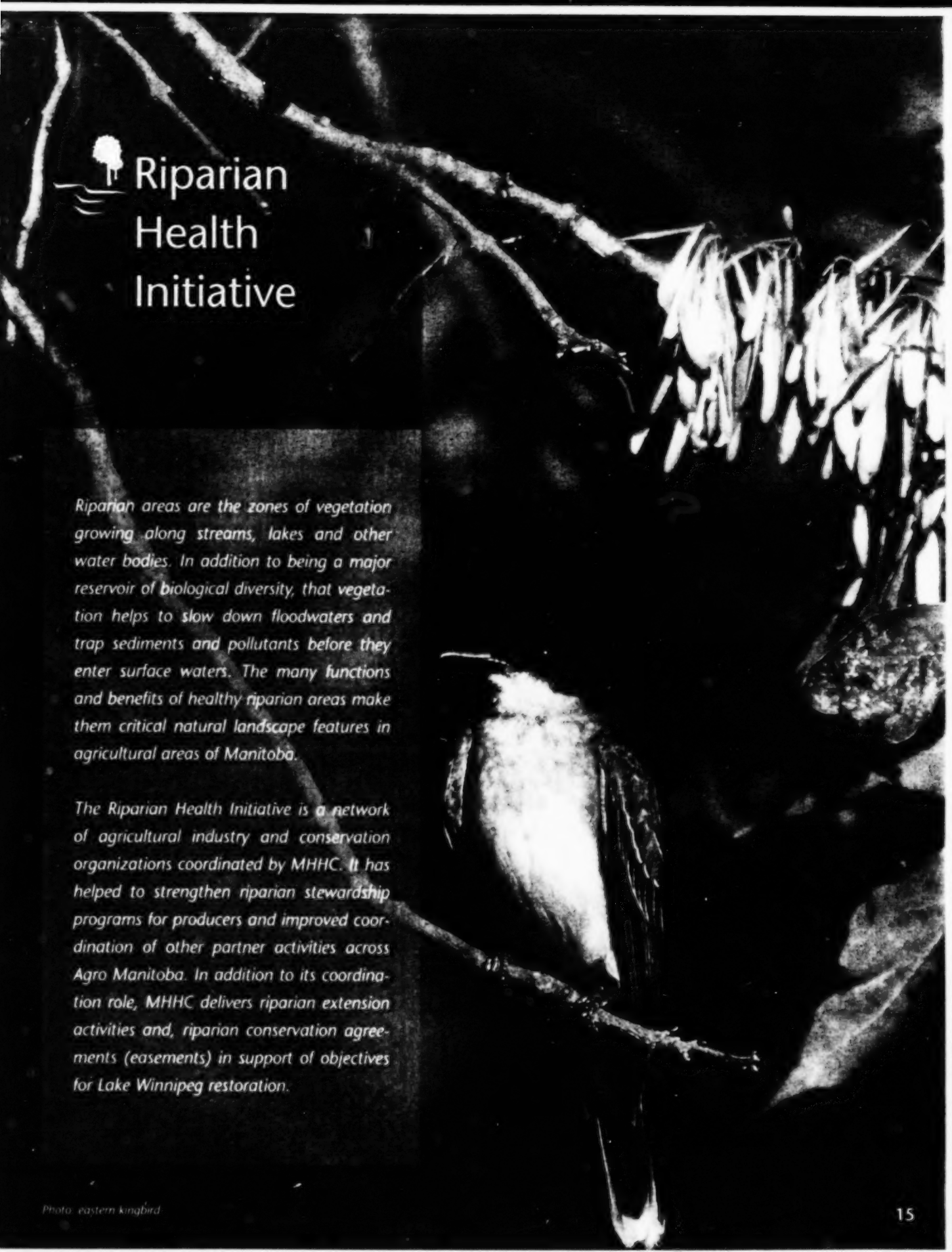
In 1991, Goulden became the MHHC Field Manager. In addition to setting up an effective NAWMP delivery team, his tireless communication with farmers and community leaders helped all NAWMP partners. His success rested on his willingness to engage people early and often and his special talents as a problem-solver.

Herb Goulden (left) receiving his Great Blue Heron Award from Jack Dubois, Director of Wildlife and Ecosystem Management, Manitoba Conservation (Photo: Tim Sopuck)

In the 1990s Goulden played an important role in the development of Manitoba's *Conservation Agreements Act*. Goulden developed delivery approaches that subsequently made MHHC the largest conservation easement holder in Canada.

Goulden retired in 2000, but has continued to act in an advisory capacity to MHHC. He also accepted senior advisory positions in two major agricultural organizations. Farm-based organizations have recognized his special ability to understand the needs of farmers and the valued conservation perspective he brings to discussions of the environment and rural development.

Riparian Health Initiative



Riparian areas are the zones of vegetation growing along streams, lakes and other water bodies. In addition to being a major reservoir of biological diversity, that vegetation helps to slow down floodwaters and trap sediments and pollutants before they enter surface waters. The many functions and benefits of healthy riparian areas make them critical natural landscape features in agricultural areas of Manitoba.

The Riparian Health Initiative is a network of agricultural industry and conservation organizations coordinated by MHHC. It has helped to strengthen riparian stewardship programs for producers and improved coordination of other partner activities across Agro Manitoba. In addition to its coordination role, MHHC delivers riparian extension activities and, riparian conservation agreements (easements) in support of objectives for Lake Winnipeg restoration.

Photo: eastern kingbird

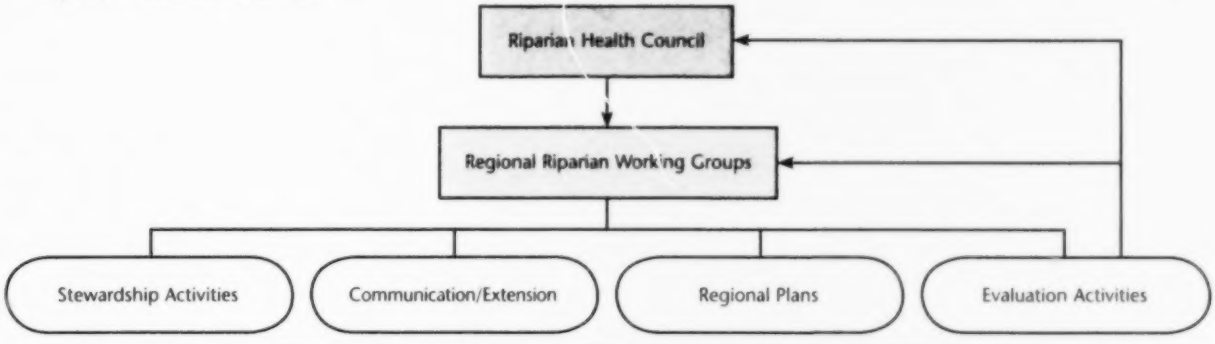
Program Overview

The Riparian Health Initiative (RHI) was launched in 2001 to enhance collaborative approaches for riparian area management across Agro Manitoba. A priority of the program is to increase the capability of agricultural producers to manage riparian areas effectively and sustainably. Through the collective efforts of agricultural and conservation groups, a network supporting initiatives to help conserve and enhance riparian and associated lands has been established. The program, originally launched with core funding from the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, is now supported primarily from AAFC's Greencover component of the Agriculture Policy Framework as well as the Stewardship-in-Action Fund of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Manitoba Water Stewardship provides funding for the riparian easement component of MHHC's suite of riparian activities.

The RHI has been facilitated by the Riparian Health Council (RHC), which was created to promote coordinated programs and activities for riparian areas and associated lands in Agro Manitoba. The RHC is chaired by the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association and has membership from producer groups, government agencies and non-government conservation organizations including the MHHC. The RHC's coordination activities have helped improve the efficiency and effectiveness of stewardship activities, information and education programs for interested landowners and evaluation activities focusing on riparian issues and program effectiveness. The spirit of partnership and joint approaches have been key building blocks of the RHI.

Managing the Water's Edge: MHHC's riparian program coordinator works with a number of program partners to deliver *Managing the Water's Edge (MWE)*, a riparian area extension initiative. It is supported by a team of

Riparian Health Initiative



Riparian Health Council Participants

The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association (Chair)
Keystone Agricultural Producers
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration
Manitoba Conservation
Manitoba Conservation Districts
The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (Secretariat)
Manitoba Forage Council
Manitoba Department of Finance
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Environment Canada
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Nature Conservancy of Canada
Manitoba Water Stewardship

(As of April/08)

Cherished River Bank Habitat is Now Their Legacy

A little bit of "wild" remains along the Little Saskatchewan River thanks to Harold and Isabella Proven. They have donated a conservation agreement that permanently protects the habitat on part of their farm northwest of Minnedosa.

"We realized that this is the only way we are going to save this area for the crocuses and all the flora and fauna," said Isabella Proven during the dedication ceremony acknowledging the donation.

"It's been a great place for us," she added. "Hopefully it will be in the family for generations to come."

The Proven conservation agreement dedication event was a family affair (Photo: Tim Sopuck)

The Proven property CA protects the banks of the Little Saskatchewan River. It also contains a large native grassland that is well known throughout the area as the spot where prairie crocuses bob in the wind each spring.

It is evident that this piece of property holds special significance for the entire Proven Family including the four generations gathered for the dedication.

"It's unique in many ways, "said Harold. He cited an old ox-cart trail that follows along the river, long-eared owls that nest in the nearby bluff and, of course, the crocuses.

Today the land is farmed by Doug Proven and Cindy Murray, making them the fourth generation to farm there. Beginning with Harold's grandfather, who homesteaded the present farm nearby, a total of six generations have enjoyed the peace and tranquility found along the Little Saskatchewan River.

Adapted from an article in the Minnedosa Tribune

Manitoba Increases Support for Riparian Area Protection

At year-end, MHHC received a $300,000.00 grant from the Province of Manitoba to support its riparian conservation agreement (easement) program.

"The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation has played a leadership role in water protection and habitat preservation, and the province is proud to continue their work," said Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship.

Future agreements will be established along critical riparian lands in the Red River basin or other tributaries that drain into Lake Winnipeg. This funding will allow an estimated 20 conservation agreements, protecting 900 acres of river and stream banks, to be bought.

Lorne Colpitts (right) receiving cheque from the Honourable Christine Melnick, Minister of Water Stewardship (center) and MLA for Wellington, Flor Marcelino

"Healthy riparian areas contribute many benefits to the environment and to society," said John Whitaker, MHHC chair. "We are pleased to have additional funds to expand the corporation's efforts in this vital area."

The province is the primary financial supporter of MHHC's riparian conservation agreements program. This grant brings provincial investment in the program to $684,000.00. As of March 31, 2008, MHHC has used provincial funding to secure, or has in progress, 15 riparian conservation agreements on 1,093 acres of priority riparian lands.

Adapted from a Province of Manitoba news release

trained extension personnel from a number of agencies and organizations that are capable of delivering riparian management workshops. The MWE team provides agricultural producers and other key audiences with useful information that leads to effective management of riparian and associated lands for the benefit of the environment, rural communities and landowners' bottom lines.

A total of 22 workshops and presentations were delivered to approximately 425 producers and agriculture and conservation agency delivery staff in 2007/08. Twelve of those workshops included a hands-on streamside demonstration of riparian health assessment, which is an increase from previous years. MWE workshops have three main features: 1) discuss the role and importance of riparian areas in the environment, especially as it relates to water quality; 2) demonstrate a self-assessment system that producers can use to rate the health of their own riparian areas; and 3) discuss land use practices that can enhance the health of riparian and associated lands. Workshop participants are presented with a Manitoba-based riparian area assessment workbook designed to support landowners' land use decision-making.

While the MWE focus is agricultural producers and related extension agency personnel, the MWE concept and core messages have been successfully integrated into Manitoba Education's high school biology curriculum. In 2007/08 MWE has continued to take advantage of opportunities to deliver student workshops, especially with rural schools.

Communications products were developed in 2007/08 to support MWE activities. The most important was a booklet summarizing the experiences of five livestock producers who have successfully adapted riparian area enhancement practices into their farm operations. The target audience for this document is agricultural producers. MWE also developed a program brochure in 2007/08 and continued to distribute the Riparian Grazing Strategies Manual and related fact sheets.

Related MWE Activities: In 2007/08 MHHC staff participated in one Integrated Watershed Management Planning (IWMP) initiative, the Four Watersheds IWMP south of Riding Mountain National Park, spearheaded by Manitoba Conservation Districts and Manitoba Water Stewardship. MHHC provided input on the state of riparian lands and programs for State of the Watershed reports in those areas.

MHHC also partnered with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District in a pilot project designed to develop a reliable, cost-effective, remote-sensing based approach to assessing riparian area health. The objective is to develop a cost-effective assessment system to help watershed managers assess riparian health, target future riparian programs and detect riparian health changes as watershed management activities proceed. MHHC role was to provide ground-based field assessments of a pilot watershed to support complementary, remote-sensing assessments, using shape-recognition software analysis of aerial photography, of the same sites. Results from this year's work have informed project partners that a full-scale assessment of the system was warranted in 2008/09 and, at year-end, MHHC had developed a work plan and funding support for the 2008/09 field season.

Reaching the Next Generation of Producers

Working longer hours and taking off-farm jobs to make ends meet means that many farmers have little time left for agricultural extension events.

MWE's coordinator, Marilena Kowalchuk, has adapted to this reality by taking new approaches to reaching producers and other land managers.

For example, MWE delivered workshops to all students enrolled in the Assiniboine Community College Agriculture and Environment programs. Whether their focus is business or ecology, all will have a basic level of knowledge when it comes to environmental sustainability.

MWE was also invited to do workshops with three rural high schools. "Students are actually my favourite audience," Kowalchuk confesses, "They are like sponges, soaking up everything I have to say."

MWE workshops typically have a classroom session followed by a field assessment held outdoors. The students are quite accustomed to this method of information delivery and because of this, the message can be communicated more effectively than with many other audiences.

"By delivering messages about sustainable agriculture to rural students, we are planting the seeds of sustainability for their future in farming," said Kowalchuk. "And we shouldn't underestimate the influence that farm youth already have in farm management decisions."

Riparian Conservation Agreement (Easement) Program

MHHC has received funding over the past few years to deliver perpetual Conservation Agreements (CAs) to protect intact riparian habitats on watercourses in the Lake Winnipeg watershed. Additional grant funding of $300.0 received from Manitoba Water Stewardship at the end of 2007/08 provide MHHC with a significant opportunity to increase efforts to deliver conservation agreements on priority riparian areas and other source water protection lands.

Given the importance of healthy riparian areas in maintaining surface water quality, this is an investment in the health of Lake Winnipeg and other surface waters, as well as biodiversity conservation in the agricultural landscape.

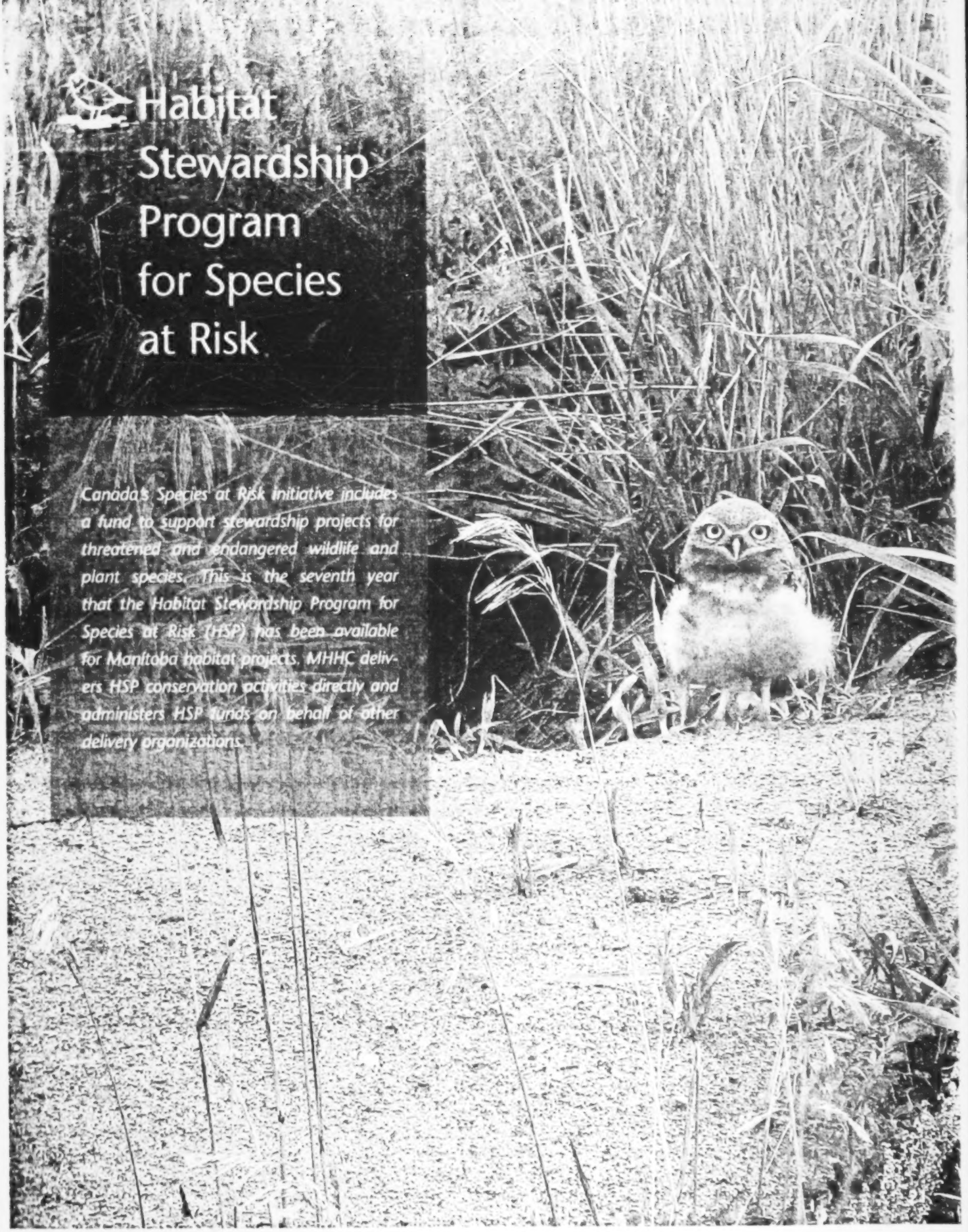
In 2007/08 MHHC field staff made substantial progress, completing a total of 5 riparian CAs on 232 acres of habitat. At year end an additional 3 riparian CAs were in progress on 152 acres. This brings the total number of Riparian CAs to 15 CAs protecting over 1,000 acres of riparian habitat.

While CAs can be used to secure priority riparian habitats on waterways entering Lake Winnipeg, MHHC focused on the Red River and its immediate tributaries in 2007/08. In addition to contributing to objectives for Lake Winnipeg restoration, protection of remaining Red River native riparian habitats also contributes to the shared goal of Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota to establish a Greenway – a corridor of conserved riverbank habitats – on the Red River from its headwaters to Lake Winnipeg.

MHHC stimulated uptake of riparian CAs along the Red River through presentations to rural municipal councils south of Winnipeg and direct contacts with key landowners. Response has been favourable and interest from landowners in the CA option continues to be encouraging.

In 2007/08 a partnership with the Whitemud Conservation District was begun to protect riparian areas in the district with perpetual CAs. MHHC signed one CA for 27 acres protecting riverbank habitat.

burrowing owl (Photo: Curtis Hullick)



Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk

Canada's Species at Risk Initiative includes a fund to support stewardship projects for threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species. This is the seventh year that the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk (HSP) has been available for Manitoba habitat projects. MHHC delivers HSP conservation activities directly and administers HSP funds on behalf of other delivery organizations.

Introduction

The federal Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) was created in 2000 as the Species at Risk Act was being developed. Involving Environment Canada, Parks Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the HSP's objective is to support voluntary, stewardship-based approaches to protecting habitat for species at risk. The emphasis is on activities that will conserve or enhance habitat for species identified as either being endangered, threatened or of special concern. Manitoba efforts are focused largely in agriculturally developed regions, where habitat loss has been the most significant.

MHHC Projects

MHHC field delivery contribution to HSP is long-term protection of habitat required by species at risk in the agricultural landscape through purchased perpetual conservation agreements (CAs). All HSP CA lands must be associated with species of concern identified by the Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC). Priority habitats in Manitoba have been identified through historical and ongoing surveys of species of concern. Priority habitats:

1) Native mixed-grass prairie, which has been reduced to remnant stands in southwestern Manitoba, is important for conserving declining native plant and grassland wildlife populations. Plant species of concern include buffalograss, smooth goosefoot and small white lady's-slipper. The northern prairie skink, burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike and Sprague's pipit are also species at risk.
2) Riparian habitats in the Assiniboine River basin are also a priority, where the aquatic species of concern are carmine shiner, bigmouth buffalo and silver chub.
3) Other habitats for specific plant and animal species that have been identified as being at risk. Examples of such species include western spiderwort, hairy prairie-clover, red-headed woodpecker and yellow rail.

A total of 125 CAs, totaling 25,975 acres, have been completed since MHHC began working through the HSP. Since inception, the program has spent $1.87 million on CAs, funds that have gone directly to farmers and other rural landowners.

In 2007/08 13 conservation agreements were completed on 2,660 acres of land under the HSP. Those included 11 CAs on 2,487 acres of mixed grass prairie and two CAs on 173 acres of riparian habitats.

At year-end, seven additional CAs, representing 2,728 acres, were in process.

Other HSP Activities

MHHC assists other Manitoba partners, especially Manitoba Conservation, by managing HSP agreements and administering the employment contracts of seven term and seasonal employees that are supervised by Manitoba Conservation staff. Projects that are being assisted include: mixed-grass prairie grazing project; mixed-grass prairie inventory; species at risk inventory; piping plovers; and woodland caribou habitat stewardship.

Carson Spence (Photo: Bill Stilwell)

Native Grasslands a Treasure

A Waskada area cattle producer always knew there was something special about his pasture. But, it wasn't until he looked into protecting the place with a conservation agreement that he fully understood what a unique treasure he had on his hands.

"This is all native grassland that has never been cultivated," said Carson Spence. "We knew there was something unique there," he said, "but we just took it for granted."

That is no longer the case, as Spence has now protected 480-acres of native grassland with a conservation agreement. The agreement allows him to permanently protect the habitat while continuing to raise cattle and graze the grasslands.

"During the past few years university students have visited to conduct research here," said Spence. They identified a variety of native grassland plants, including buffalograss, a rare species that, in Canada, is only found along the Souris and Blind River valleys of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Buffalograss is tolerant of grazing and its resistance to drought gives it a competitive edge over other vegetation.

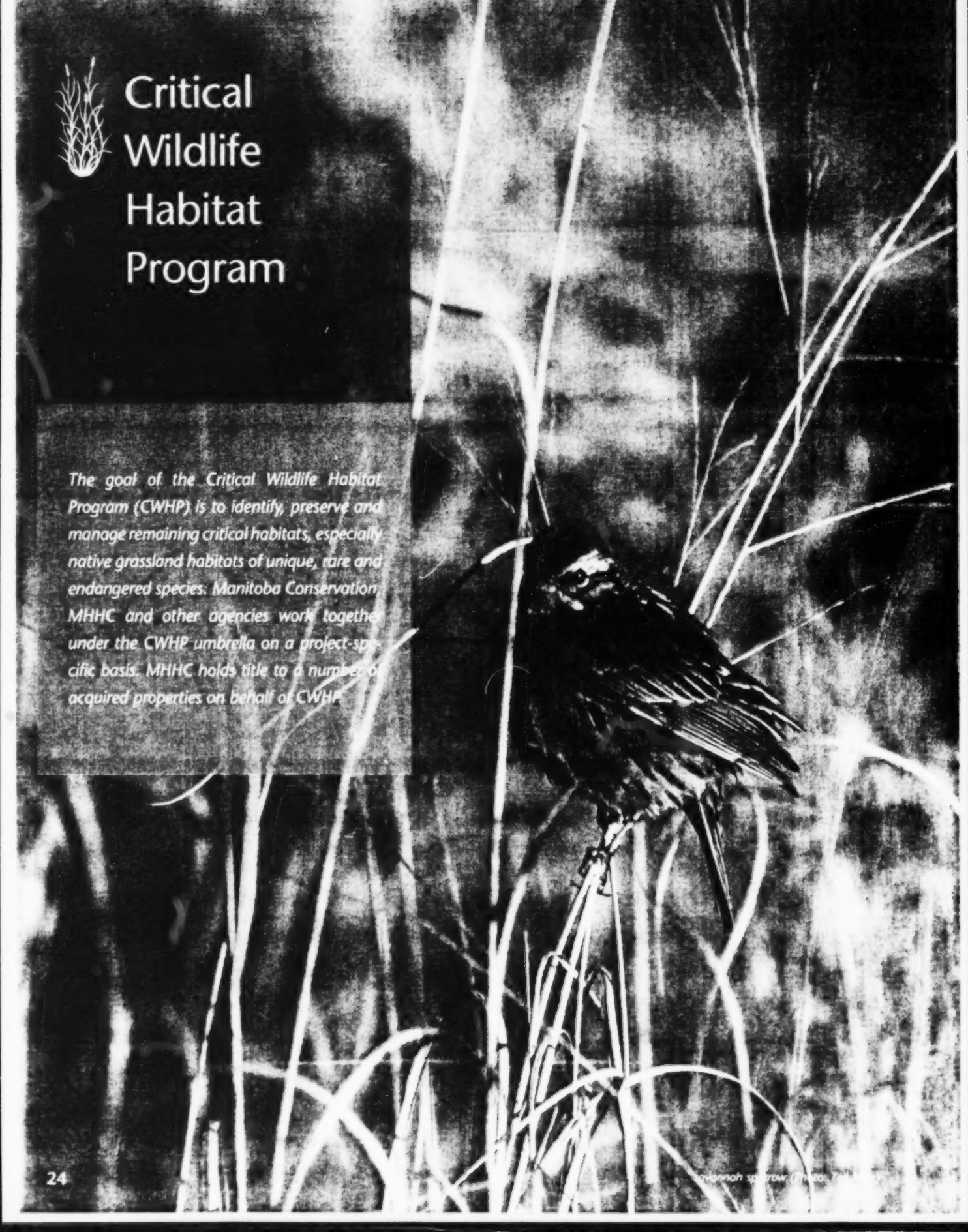
Spence is at least the third generation of his family to farm in the area. Their family has always made the best possible use of the native grasslands by using them as pasture.

Deciding to protect the habitat on his land with a Conservation Agreement was a fairly simple decision, for Spence. "Knowing that I am never going to grain farm it, it will never be broken. This decision was made even easier by the payment I received," Carson noted.

Adapted from an article in the Brandon Sun

Critical Wildlife Habitat Program

The goal of the Critical Wildlife Habitat Program (CWHP) is to identify, preserve and manage remaining critical habitats, especially native grassland habitats of unique, rare and endangered species. Manitoba Conservation, MHHC and other agencies work together under the CWHP umbrella on a project-specific basis. MHHC holds title to a number of acquired properties on behalf of CWHP.



Mixed-Grass Prairie Habitat Stewardship Project

Habitat loss is the greatest limiting factor to south west Manitoba mixed-grass prairie habitats and the species at risk these prairies support. In addition to habitat loss caused by cultivation, it can occur as a result of improper management resulting in species composition changes with an increase in non-native plant species and shrubby growth. This degrades the quality of the remaining prairies, impacting associated wildlife species and reducing economic returns to the landowner.

The Mixed-grass Prairie Habitat Stewardship Project goal is to conserve the quality and quantity of the remaining native mixed-grass prairie grasslands in southwestern Manitoba. The project has two main components. The first is the Mixed-grass Prairie Inventory and Extension component which identifies and grades remaining prairie lands, focuses on habitat conservation efforts, raises landowner awareness of the value of prairie lands, and guides future management and stewardship activities. The second is the Mixed-grass Prairie Grazing component which promotes agricultural activities that incorporate wise land stewardship and biodiversity conservation by entering into five-year agreements with private landowners to implement twice-over rotational grazing on native grasslands, and relay information to landowners on sustainable prairie management.

Eighteen (18) new sites totalling approximately 1,760 acres were inventoried in 2007. Project staff also revisited higher quality sites to monitor changes in habitat quality since the sites were originally inventoried. Landowners on these sites were interviewed to assess their attitudes and awareness about mixed-grass prairie management and conservation. Twenty-seven (27) sites were reassessed totalling 3,680 acres and 19 landowners participated in interviews. Fifty-two percent of these pastures are rotationally grazed. Forty-eight percent of the landowners reported problems with encroachment of woody species and 86% had problems with weedy species, including leafy spurge. Eleven (11) landowners had observed or were aware of species at risk on their property. Most landowners indicated that they would be comfortable knowing that their land management was beneficial to species at risk. Two sites totalling approximately 320 acres were inventoried in order to determine suitability for a conservation agreement at the request of MHHC. Eleven (11) grazing projects were revisited to assess change over time and one new grazing project was inventoried to establish a baseline for the site. Of the sites inventoried in 2007, 31% were graded "B," 55% were graded "C" and 14% were graded "D."

The total of mixed-grass prairie included in the inventory now stands at 181,151 acres with 60% being graded as "C" or better, which means it is in good condition or has the potential to return to good condition with proper management.

In 2007/08, eight (8) five-year grazing agreements were signed to protect 2,064 acres of native grasslands. Various extension activities including two tours, and a three-day workshop were held to allow landowners with native pastures to learn more about the twice-over system, and to demonstrate how the system can be used as a tool to enhance native grasslands. The twice-over grazing system has been documented to increase desirable plant species, reduce bare ground, and inhibit non-native plant species, trees and shrubs,

Gary, Astrid and Michael Decock (Photo: Glen Campbell)

Twice-Over Grazing is a Family Affair

Gary and Astrid Decock, along with their son Michael, own and manage 3D Ranch near the Plum Lakes west of Brandon. After attending a Critical Wildlife Habitat Program grazing tour in 2002, the Decocks became interested in adapting the "twice-over" grazing system, which has been designed to enhance the diversity and productivity of native grasslands by grazing native grasslands in a more ecologically appropriate manner.

In 2003 they signed an agreement with the Critical Wildlife Habitat Program that provided cost-shared support for additional fencing needed to adapt to the system.

According to Curtis Hullick, the area MHHC field representative, the Decocks follow the rotation faithfully. For the Decocks, the twice-over system has paid off financially. Monitoring of cattle performance since the system has started has shown that every year their calves have consistently had better weight gains than before the system was used.

Grassland improvements are also evident. Their native prairie pasture is supporting rare prairie species such as the Sprague's pipit, which was recorded after introduction of this grazing system.

The benefits of this system have led Michael Decock to become a spokesperson for the twice-over system, showcasing their success in many tours and workshops.

Funding assistance for this project was provided by Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk.

all of which result in an increase in the number of grassland birds on these pastures.

Additional funding for both components was provided by Manitoba Conservation and Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk (HSP).

Tall Grass Prairie Preserve

MHHC continued to be a part of the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve Management Committee along with Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Naturalists Society, Environment Canada and Nature Conservancy of Canada. The committee produced an annual work plan for field activities at the preserve. Monitoring of rare orchids, insects, songbirds, permanent sample plots, and management prescriptions continued to be among the key field activities on preserve lands. Seven new properties (1,280 acres in total) acquired by the Nature Conservancy of Canada were inventoried and the vegetation was mapped in 2007/08. Special note was made of species listed as endangered, such as the western prairie fringed orchid as well as provincially rare species. The Preserve Management Committee permitted grazing by nine co-operators on 23 Preserve properties totalling 3,280 acres in 2007. At the end of the grazing season the condition of all grazed properties were assessed to document the impacts of grazing activities so that adjustments could be made to livestock numbers and grazing duration if necessary. The Preserve is becoming well known for research opportunities from various universities and organizations. In 2007/08, 11 researchers worked on approved projects on Preserve lands including studies on the western prairie fringed-orchid; habitat assessments for grassland bird studies; soil sampling; various insect studies and grazing assessments.

Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, Manitoba Conservation, Nature Conservancy of Canada, and the Manitoba Naturalists Society provided funds to support Preserve activities.

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration)

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Environment Canada-Canadian Wildlife Service

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Manitoba Conservation

Manitoba Water Stewardship

Delta Waterfowl Foundation

Keystone Agricultural Producers

Manitoba Conservation Districts

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Riparian Health Initiative

The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

Keystone Agricultural Producers

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration)

Manitoba Water Stewardship

Manitoba Conservation

Manitoba Conservation Districts Association

Manitoba Forage Council

Manitoba Department of Finance

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Environment Canada

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Critical Wildlife Habitat Program

Manitoba Conservation

Manitoba Naturalists Society

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Wildlife Habitat Canada

Environment Canada - Canadian Wildlife Service

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